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Biden Warns Motorists Of Dangers of Distracted Driving

Joins Federal, State Officials To Call For Safer Driving on Inaugural Stop the Texts Day

Wilmington – Citing the alarming statistic that a majority of young drivers admit to texting while behind the wheel, Attorney General Beau Biden today joined the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, State Attorneys General and Consumer Protection Agencies, and the Ad Council in marking the first nationwide *Stop the Texts Day*, a public education effort to encourage safe and careful driving.

“Texting while driving is not only unsafe, it’s against the law,” Attorney General Biden said. “Parents, law enforcement, and teens themselves all play an important part in reinforcing the simple message that distracted driving leads to injury and death. Do the responsible thing and keep your eyes on the road when you’re behind the wheel.”

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports that distracted driving is the number one killer of American teens. In 2009, nearly 500,000 people were injured and over 5,000 were killed due to various forms of distracted driving, including texting while driving. To educate young adult drivers about the dangers of texting while driving, today a new nationwide public service campaign was launched with PSAs featuring NASCAR driver Kasey Kahne. The public service campaign reminds young drivers that it is dangerous to do anything that takes your attention away from the road and serves as a reminder to leave the risky driving to the professionals. It directs consumers to stoptextsstopwrecks.org, where teens and young adults can find facts about the impact of texting while driving and tips for how to curb the behavior.

In support of the public education campaign, the Ad Council today release the results of a national survey of young drivers ages 16 – 24. The online survey found that sixty percent admitted that they have texted while driving and that forty-four percent say that friends are the most influential source to encourage them to curb their texting and driving habits, followed by their parents (33 percent). Most notably, eighty-eight percent of texting drivers said a law against the behavior would encourage them to completely stop or be less likely to text while driving. Additionally, ninety-six percent, of young adult drivers said large fines, a suspended license and/or jail time, higher insurance rates and other financial and legal consequences would encourage them not to text while driving.

Delaware’s hands-free law requiring motorists to use a hands-free device while driving, took effect in January, 2011.

For more information about the *Stop the Texts. Stop the Wrecks.* public education campaign,
visit stoptextsstopwrecks.org.

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